

# Proposed Development of Aparthotel

# Hathersage Road, Manchester

# Sequential Test Assessment

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# 1. Introduction

PAR Planning has been commissioned by Tatton Investments 2 Ltd to prepare a Design and Access Statement for a site at 79 to 85Hathersage Road, Manchester. The proposal is to seek outline planning consent to demolish an existing block of Victorian properties which have been extensively modified over the years and which now provide student bed sits, to enable the construction of a new 'Aparthotel' providing single rooms.

This is a new concept in hotel accommodation which provides flexible accommodation which is available on short stay or longer stay terms and can be used as a conventional hotel or for longer term use for those on short term employment contracts.

This design and access statement sets out the justification for the proposed redevelopment of buildings at 79- 85 Hathersage Road, Manchester. It looks at project benefits, describes the scheme, analyses the planning policies relevant to the site and looks at specific issues of transport, noise, flood risk etc.

Manchester City Council has requested a sequential test analysis for the proposal as Planning Policies describe hotels as town centre uses and the site is considered to be outside the currently defined city centre boundary.

This analysis looks at:

**The Project**
**Relationship to Planning Policies**
**Local Provision**
**Relationship to Manchester Royal Infirmary**

## 2. Project Description

The project will provide a total of 135 rooms for letting and will incorporate a lounge, café, business centre and gym for users.It will provide a much needed facility in the area given high demand from the Manchester Royal Infirmary and Manchester University staff, students and visitors and the relative lack of alternative accommodation within the area.

## 3. Relationship to Planning Policies

The main local policy document is the Manchester Core Strategy 2012 to 2027. The Manchester Core Strategy is the current operative principle planning document for the area. The consultation with the Council quotes a number of policies from this document as forming the basis of any decision. Without quoting the full policies we have sought to identify the key elements of these policies as they relate to the site.
Key policies from this are:

### Policy SP 1

**Spatial Principles**
The key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027 are:
The Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high- quality city living.

### Policy EC 3

**The Regional Centre**
Within the Regional Centre development for employment generating uses including offices and other commercial development will be encouraged. Office developments will be appropriate providing that:
• They are in locations which are well connected by sustainable transport to both the City Centre and residential areas, and
• The scale and type of office development does not undermine delivery of employment space within the City Centre.
The Regional Centre is an appropriate location for large scale leisure uses, for which City Centre sites are unsuitable.

Proposals for other town centre uses will be assessed in accordance with policies C1 and C9, unless included in an allocation or the uses are ancillary to the main employment use. Housing will also be an appropriate use within the Regional Centre, although this should complement the development of mixed use employment areas. Subject to site and location details, the Regional Centre will generally be a location where higher density residential development is appropriate.
**8.14** The Regional Centre includes parts of Manchester, Salford and Trafford. The boundary is shown in Figure 8.1 **(i)** and the part in Manchester is also shown on the proposals map.

### Policy CC 4

**Visitors - Tourism, Culture and Leisure**
The City Centre will be the focus for culture and leisure in the City Region. Proposals to improve the appearance, use and accessibility of all cultural and visitor attractions and

associated facilities will be supported. The improvement of facilities for business visitors will also be supported.
Development in the City Centre which improves facilities for visitors, including Manchester residents, will be promoted. In order that the existing visitor attractions can reach their potential it is also important that the City Centre has the infrastructure to accommodate the necessary volume of visitors. Hotels have become an increasingly important use across the City, and these will be particularly important in the City Centre. New hotel development which contributes to the quality of the City Centre hotel offer will be supported. **Proposals for new hotels outside of the City Centre will be supported where they support visitor-orienteddevelopment and where the Council is confident that they will be deliverable**. (My emphasis)

## Policy C 1

### Centre Hierarchy
Development of town centre uses (as defined in national planning policy) will be prioritised in the centres identified in this policy, taking account of the different roles of the City Centre, District Centres and Local Centres. In order to maintain the vitality and viability of its centres, provide services as locally as possible and minimise the need to travel by car Manchester's centre hierarchy is:-

### Manchester City Centre
The City Centre is the focus for comparison retail for the Manchester City Region. Its catchment exceeds the City boundaries and the capacity for future comparison development reflects this. The focus for new comparison retail is the Primary Shopping Area. The City Centre is also the regional focus for commerce, culture, leisure and tourism. The City Centre has a need for additional convenience retail to meet the needs of a growing residential population, but this role is distinct from its comparison retail function, with a different catchment (see policies CC1-10 for detailed policy guidance).

### District Centres
District centres have an essential role in providing key services to the City's neighbourhoods including shopping, commercial, leisure, public and community functions, ensuring that residents can access such services easily. They are also a focus for the City's residential neighbourhoods, providing an important opportunity to define local character. Manchester's 17 district centres are shown below including the newly designated district centre, Baguley (West Wythenshawe). Development in these centres should primarily respond to the needs of the catchment and recognise the need to support the vitality and viability of other centres.

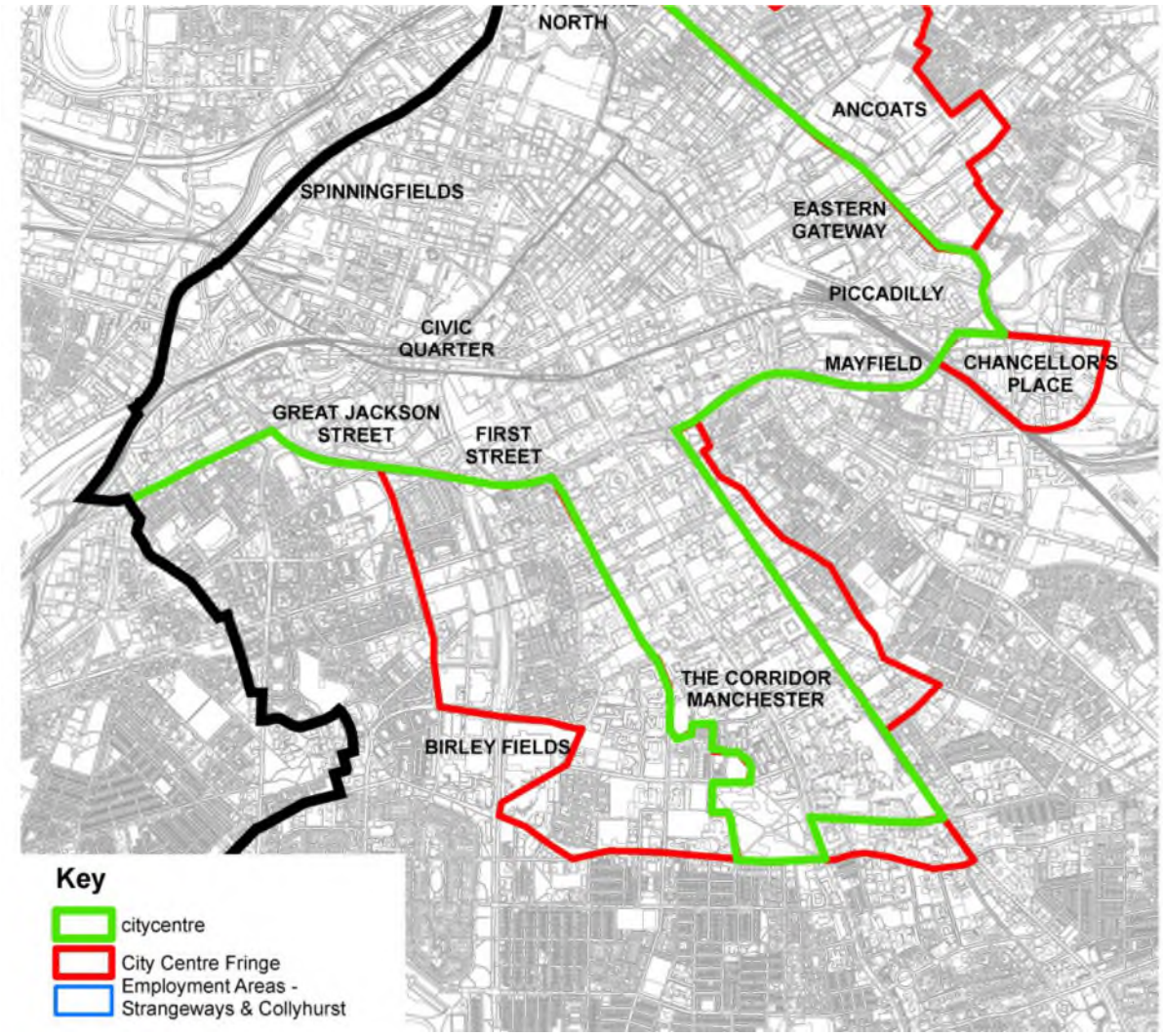
### Local Centres
Local centres meet local needs for small scale retail and services to meet day-day needs. There are 24 identified local centres, including new local centres at Moston Lane, Collyhurst and Merseybank Avenue. Locations which are not identified in the Local Development Framework but which perform the same function in terms of scale and meeting local needs will also be considered to be local centres.

## Policy C 9

### Out-of-centre development
Development of town centre uses in locations which are outside a centre identified in policy C1 or a strategic location identified for such uses will be inappropriate unless it can meet

the following criteria:

- There are no sequentially preferable sites, or allocated sites, within the area the development is intended to serve that are available, suitable and viable
- The proposal would not have unacceptable impacts, either individually or cumulativelywith recently completed and approved schemes and having regard to any allocationsfor town centre uses, on the vitality and viability of the City Centre and designateddistrict and local centres. An assessment of impacts will be required for retaildevelopments of more than local significance; and,
- The proposal is appropriate in terms of its scale and function to its location.
- Development that improves the environment of an existing out-of-centre facility or its relationship with surrounding uses will be supported, providing that it also meets the othercriteria in this policy.




**Analysis**

It is acknowledged that the proposal site lies outside the defined Regional Centre. See plan above. The site lies immediately adjacent to the boundary above in the south eastern corner adjoining the defined (green) boundary and the city centre fringe boundary. The boundary has been drawn in a way which excludes many City Centre uses such as the Octagon a major NHS facility and visually there is little to separate the site from the areas within the boundary.

It is argued, however, that the defined boundary is the centre line of the streets outside the site and so in visual and functional terms the site lies within the defined centre. It is evident that there are uses on the opposite corners and across the Hathersage Road which are clearly regional centre uses such as a multi storey car park.
There is also a major health facility, Octagon House, across Hathersage Road from the site which is outside the defined regional centre and there are other uses such as retailing, Victoria Baths and offices outside the area which could easily be included within the boundary.
See photos below.








Across Upper Brook Street is an area defined as a City Centre Fringe area which was specifically drawn to embrace a private hospital which has not been developed. Again, there is no visual or functional difference between the proposal site and this area.
Past planning practice has been to support proposals which are within or adjacent to defined centres and it is argued that the lack of an obvious difference between the regional centre and this site makes this location appropriate for the proposed use.

It should also be noted that the policies make specific reference to supporting hotel development outside the City centre where they support visitor oriented development. It is our contention that the proposal will specifically support visitors to the Universities and the Manchester Royal Infirmary which have very specific locational requirements which mean that a City Centre location is inappropriate.

A search has been undertaken for other sites within the local area which are within the Regional Centre. The area of search comprised principally the Corridor area embracing the University and Royal Infirmary complexes but has looked at sites adjoining this core area. This has included sites within the main City Centre closest to the Corridor. It also includes sites for apartments which are large enough for the proposed scheme and sites for other commercial activities which are sufficiently large.
Sites owned by the University and Infirmary are excluded because these are reserved for the future development of these institutions. The following sites have been identified.

A number of planning applications for hotel development have been identified and sites on Upper Brook Street, within the Regional Centre  and on Swinton Grove have been examined.

| SITE | PROPOSED USE | COMMENT |
|---|---|---|
| 2-10 Stockport Road | 111 Bed Hotel | Previous renewal, poorly located in relation to Infirmary |
| Great Ancoats Street | 4385 square meter hotel | Previous renewal, alternative uses now being pursued |
| Fairfield Street, Piccadilly | 94 bed hotel | Subject to wider Piccadilly proposals |
| River Street/ Mancunian Way | 215 bed hotel | Subject to alternative proposals |
| London Road Fire Station | 227 bed hotel | Remote from Infirmary |
| Wilmslow Road, Didsbury | Hotel in mixed use scheme | Not being progressed. Outside regional centre |
| Gorton Monastary | 72 bed hotel | Not being progressed. Outside regional centre |
| Nell Lane, Withington Hospital | Hotel within major hospital redevelopment | Never pursued, site not available |
| Former Elizabeth Gaskell College | Proposed hospital | Adjoins application site. Within Regional Centre. Revised hospital scheme being pursued. |
| 45 Upper Brook Street | Proposed commercial car dealership | Still in active use |
| 1-5 Plymouth Grove | 61 Bed apartment scheme | To small, apartments more valuable. |
| 2-4 Swinton Grove | Apartment scheme | To small to be commercially viable. Listed building |

A number of these are being pursued for apartment development or are too small to accommodate a scheme large enough to provide the required central facilities or affect listed buildings. The nearest site at the former Elizabeth Gaskell College site has the same locational advantages and could potentially be available following the withdrawal of a previous hospital scheme, but it s understood that the site is to be developed as a smaller hospital.

It is considered that this site is the closest opportunity to the Regional Centre which is large enough to accommodate this proposal.

## 4. Local Provision

There is limited existing hotel provision as set out below.

Hotels located around HATHERSAGE ROAD in Manchester, England , no more than 10 minutes walking distance from MRI and University.

**3 star hotels** ★★★☆☆ (3 hotels)

**New Crescent Gate Hotel Manchester** - Park Cresecent Victoria Park, Manchester,
**Victoria Park Hotel Manchester** - 4 Park Crescent, Manchester,
**Victoria Hall Student Accommodation at Upper Brook Manchester** - 281 Upper Brook Street, Manchester, (occasional availability)

**2 star hotels** ★★☆☆☆ (2 hotels)

**Luther King House Manchester** - Brighton Grove, Manchester
**Travelodge Manchester Upper Brook Street** - 227 Upper Brook Street, Manchester

**1 star hotels** ★☆☆☆☆ (1 hotel)

**Imperial Hotel Manchester** - 157 Hathersage Road, Manchester

There are no aparthotel schemes in the area. Fourteen aparthotels are listed in a Google search. Two of these are at Salford Quays, the remaining twelve are in the City Centre with none south of Mancunian Way.

It should be noted that most of these hotels also lie outside of the defined Regional Centre.

## Quality

The Council's policies argue that there is a need to improve the quality of hotel provision in the City. Most of the hotels listed above are conversions of older properties and it can be seen that the majority of these are of a quality below that proposed within a new purpose built facility such as that proposed here.

## 5. Relationship to Manchester Royal Infirmary/ Local Demand

The scheme will meet known demand for accommodation in the area.
Demand will come from several sectors:

- Hospital staff on short term contracts eg newly qualified doctors undertaking work experience, and specialists rotating around a number of hospitals;
- Lecturers attending the University on short term contracts
- Mature students attending short courses as part of distance learning packages
- Families visiting students and staff wishing to have an extended stay
- Contract staff of all kinds seeking accommodation at costs below City Centre levels.

A key relationship is to the use of the facility by the Royal Infirmary for a half way house. The adjoining Tatton House, owned by the same developer is increasingly being used for patients from the adjoining Infirmary who are close to discharge but do not require a bed within the hospital. Tatton house is being used as a short stay facility where patients can gain independence but can be visited by hospital staff easily. These patients do not need full time care but do need easy access to medical care and locations further away would place considerable burdens on hospital staff because of the much greater travel costs and times.

A location within a few minutes walk of the hospital is offering an important facility which minimises bed blocking and also reduces the costs of care.

It also assists long term patients to begin to regain their confidence in being independent and therefore the concept brings a wide range of benefits to both patients, staff and the hospital.

Currently Tatton House accommodates 8 such bed sit facilities. This has recently doubled from an initial pilot but Tatton House is now full and there is further demand from the hospital for similar provision.

An important point is that none of the existing provision is appropriate for such half way house provision. This includes the recently constructed Travellodge and is particularly relevant to other hotel facilitiesconverted from former residential properties.

## 6. Conclusion

It is argued that the site is an appropriate location for an aparthotel for several reasons.

Firstly, although the location is outside the defined Regional Centre, this is by a matter of some three meters and functionally and visually the site is part of the Regional Centre given the existence of other uses across the road which are also outside the boundary but are related to Regional Centre uses.

Secondly an assessment of sites within the Regional Centre has failed to identify any suitable alternative sites. Those sites potentially available are being pursued for higher value residential uses.

Thirdly the scheme will meet Council policy aspirations to improve the standards of hotel accommodation by providing a new build facility in an area where virtually all existing provision is in converted and low grade accommodation.

Finally the proposal is specifically designed to meet local demand s and most importantly will meet demand from the adjoining Manchester Royal Infirmary for half way house provision which cannot be accommodated anywhere else.